



A TEN-T policy for developing smart, sustainable, inclusive, and truly European transport networks

Position paper

Introduction

ITALY welcomes the European Commission consultation on the future Trans-European Transport Network policy (TEN-T), and expresses its general support to the achievement of an efficient, sustainable system of transport infrastructures at EU level.

ITALY would like to stress nine important concepts concerning the proceeding in the establishing of the two-layer Trans-European Transport Network.

The role of transport in enhancing economy growth

Modern and sustainable infrastructure projects do play a concrete role in supporting the internal market, enhancing territorial development, optimising traffic, decarbonising transports, and ensuring Europe's economic, social and territorial cohesion.

The financial dimension will remain the main factor of success for the future TEN-T policy. Italy reasserts that the TEN-T programme is a highly efficient investment programme, with direct impact on European competitiveness.

According to Commission data, as from 2013, the completion of the 30 Priority Projects alone would require an additional investment worth €148 bn., provided that all planned investments are made as foreseen up to 2013. This, in a situation of strong budget restrictions, cannot be taken for granted.

As a consequence, ITALY calls for a stronger TEN-T programme in the next EU multiannual financial framework, amounting to at least 20% of the completion cost of the core network; that is, €30 bn. for transport infrastructure (i.e. current 30 Priority Projects) alone.

Priority Network

ITALY supports the planning of a core network that ensures continuity for the ongoing projects, and therefore actively advocates the takeover of all current Priority Projects in this core network. Indeed, any major questioning of the current list could send a negative message and undermine efforts made so far by projects owners and investors.

ITALY calls for not overloading the list of priorities and expects that resources will be concentrated on concrete projects with proven European added-value, such as major on-going cross-border projects.

Focus on infrastructures

ITALY supports the introduction of "soft", innovative measures as long as they aim at fostering the development of a stronger and more integrated transport network: however, the completion of a hard transport infrastructure system, for many European countries is still a predominant need: railways, roads, ports, etc. should remain the main focus of the TEN-T policy at least for the next framework period.

Cross-border projects

Italy is involved in three major cross-border projects (Brenner, Lyon-Turin and Trieste-Divaca), to which Terzo Valico should be added, as Italian section of PP24.

These cross-border projects are the most relevant infrastructure project presently being realized in ITALY, in the field of transport.

ITALY is prioritising its transport investment policy in order to ensure adequate and uninterrupted financial support to this cross-border priority project.



On the side of the EC, ITALY would like to see:

- willingness to ensure, in the next framework programme, adequate TEN-T funding to the cross-border priority projects presently going on, which will be completed by 2020;
- active pressure of the Commission on all Member States involved in cross-border projects in order to ensure that investments are carried out in parallel among all MS concerned and no delays are accumulated;
- real, effective railway interoperability is still to be achieved both at technical and administrative level. ERTMS should be enhanced and supported as a truly European standard;
- the South railway access to Brenner is vital for the operability of the Basis Tunnel: financial resources have been earmarked out of the State budget in order to start the design and construction of the Northernmost Italian section. ITALY would like to remind that the access route from North needs to be upgraded as well and made interoperable by adopting the same signalling and safety system.

Brenner Platform

The Brenner Platform is a very useful tool in ensuring coordination among MS and IM's: ITALY calls for a strong sustain to this tool, as it can open up the way to the solution of technical and operational aspects.

Eurovignette

The application of Eurovignette will bring additional resources to the State budget: ITALY supports the reinvestment of all the revenues coming from the application of Eurovignette in the transport field: tolls and other revenues generated by road transport should be totally earmarked to transport investments and not destined to other purposes.

Ponte sullo Stretto di Messina

Preliminary works aimed at removing the existing railway track on the Calabria side have started. In December first surveys are expected. Sicily is the largest Mediterranean island, the seventh in Europe: this bridge will provide a steady connection for a population of 5 millions.

Political and, possibly, financial support from the UE would be auspicious in the making of this complex and yet necessary project.

Stability Pact

Consolidating public finances so as to reduce the high State debt remain an absolute priority: yet, other economical parameters should be taken into consideration in evaluating the public debt sustainability of each Member State. ITALY has a relatively low private debt and good bank stability.

Some key investments on priority projects, within given limits, could be considered as not aggravating directly the public debt/GDP ratio (*Golden Rule*).

ITALY supports the initiative for the emission of Eurobonds, that is European project bonds, in cooperation with EIB and PPP's, to sustain large investments in infrastructures.

Support to Mediterranean Ports

East-West routes across the Mediterranean Sea are destined to see a sharp increase in their freight traffic due to the growing import/export from/to the far East: Mediterranean Ports will play an increasingly relevant role.

PP1 is the real infrastructural backbone of the Italian transport system and this explains the concentration of investments made so far for its implementation.

This should be considered when planning the next Core Networks of EU ports.

Rome, 24 September 2010